

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

By this Amendment, claims 28, 32, 39, 49, 52, 53 and 55 are canceled and claims 27, 31, 34, 36-38, 40-42, 44-48, 50-51, 54, 56 are amended. Claims 27, 29-31, 33-38, 40-48, 50-51, 54 and 56 are pending.

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY:

The Examiner provided an Interview Summary in which the Examiner advised that the scanned copy of the March 7, 2002 Preliminary Amendment had a blank page 13. Applicants attach hereto a copy of page 13 of the Preliminary Amendment of March 7, 2002 as an Appendix. Additionally, Applicants have included the claims that appeared on page 13 of the Preliminary Amendment of March 7, 2002 in the Listing of Claims beginning on page 2 of this Amendment. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner make the claim and portion of a claim on page 13 of the Preliminary Amendment of record.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER:

At paragraph 9 of the Office Action, the Examiner stated that claims 49-51 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Independent claim 31 is amended to include the limitations of allowed claim 49 and the claims upon which claim 49 is based. Claims 50 and 51 depended from claim 49, and now depend from claim 31. Therefore, it is believed that independent claim 31 and dependent claims 33-38, 40-49 and 50-51, which

depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 31, are believed to be allowable. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner pass claims 31, 33-38, 40-49 and 50-51 to allowance.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C § 112:

The Examiner first rejected claims 27-53 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. First, the Examiner stated that in the second to last line of claim 27, the phrase “with the cut edge fed along the blade groove of the drum is indefinite. Applicant substantially amends claim 27, eliminating this language and any indefiniteness associated with this language.

Next, the Examiner stated that the same ambiguity is present in the last line of claims 28 and 32, the second to the last line of claim 31, and three lines from the end of claim 53. Claims 28, 32 and 53 are canceled. Claim 31 is amended eliminating this language and any indefiniteness associated with this language.

Next, with respect to claim 31 (and 32 which is canceled), the Examiner stated that the last four lines render the claim indefinite since this claim is directed to a device whereas these lines refer to process steps. Again, these lines are deleted in claim 31 by the present amendment, thereby removing any ambiguity associated therewith.

Next, the Examiner stated that in claims 36, 39, 40 and 42, there is no antecedent basis for “said frame.” Claims 36, 40 and 42 are amended to clarify any lack of antecedent basis here. Claim 39 is canceled.

In claim 37, line 4, the Examiner stated that there is no antecedent basis for “the relative

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movement mechanism.” Claim 37 is amended to remove any lack of antecedent basis that may have existed.

In claims 44, 45 and 46, the Examiner states that “said drums” lack antecedent basis. Applicant amends each of these claims to remove any lack of antecedent basis that may have existed.

With respect to claim 47, the Examiner stated that clarification is required. Applicant substantially amends claim 47 such that it is appropriately clear.

The Examiner next cites claim 52. Claim 52 is canceled.

Finally, the Examiner states that in the last four lines of claim 56, no antecedent basis is established for “said drums,” “the belt materials,” or “the two drums.” Applicant amends claim 56 to eliminate any lack of antecedent basis that may have existed.

It is now asserted that all of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112 have been overcome. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Examiner pass claims 27, 29-31, 33-38, 40-48, and 50-51, as amended, to allowance.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

The Examiner next rejected claims 27-34, 36-38 and 53 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over EP 927,629 to Siegenthaler taken with GB 960,488. With respect to claims 31-34 and 36-38, as stated above, these claims are allowable based on the Examiner’s indication of allowance.

With respect to claims 27-30, independent claim 27 is amended to include limitations that are similar to those of amended claim 31. Therefore, claim 27, along with its dependent claims, claims 29 and 30 should also be allowable. Claim 28 is canceled.

Claim 53 is also canceled.

It is therefore respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw the rejection to claims 27, 29-31, 33-34 and 36-38 and pass these claims to allowance.

Next, the Examiner rejected claim 35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 927,629 taken with GB 960,488 in further view of U.S. Patent No. 4,812,196. Again, since claim 35 depends from claim 31 and claim 31 is allowable, claim 35 should also be allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Examiner pass claim 35 to allowance.

Next, the Examiner rejected claims 39-41 and 54 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over EP 927,629 taken with GB 960,488 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,192,390 and/or U.S. Patent No. 5,114,511. Claim 39 is canceled. Claim 40 depends from allowable claim 31. Claim 41 depends from claim 40. Therefore, since claim 31 is allowable, claims 40 and 41 should also be allowable. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner pass claims 40 and 41 to allowance.

Independent claim 54 recites a peeling shaft (210), a rotatable press-roller 214 and a tray transportation mechanism (48). Fig. 21 shows a peeling mechanism (47), which includes the peeling shaft (210) and the press-roller (214). The peeling shaft and the press roller as recited in claim 54 are not taught or suggested by any of the cited references, alone or in combination. It is

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respectfully requested that the Examiner pass claim 54 to allowance.

Next, the Examiner rejected claims 42, 43 and 55 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over EP 927,629 taken with GB 960,488 and further in view of JP 59-22721. Claims 42 and 43 depend, either directly or indirectly from allowed claim 31, as discussed above. Claim 55 is canceled. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner pass claims 42 and 43 to allowance.

Next, the Examiner rejected claims 44-48 and 56 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over EP 927,629 taken with GB 960,488 and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 1,337,690. Claims 44-48 depend, either directly or indirectly from allowable claim 31, as discussed above. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner pass claims 44-48 to allowance.

Independent claim 56 recites a method of manufacturing two types of belt materials that are symmetric, by means of two drums. The manufacturing method, as recited in claim 56, is not taught or suggested by any of the cited references, alone or in combination. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Examiner pass claim 56 to allowance.

Finally, the Examiner rejected claim 52 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable. Claim 52 is canceled.

For at least the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

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Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

CAESAR, RIVISE, BERNSTEIN,
COHEN & POKOTILOW, LTD.

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By: 

Gaty A. Greene
Registration No. 38,897
Customer No. 03000
(215) 567-2010
Attorneys for Applicant

Please charge or credit our
Account No. 03-0075 as necessary
to effect entry and/or ensure
consideration of this submission.

54. A method of manufacturing a belt material for a tire characterized by comprising the steps of:

spirally winding a ribbon formed of a plurality of cords arranged longitudinally and covered with a rubber coating around an outer peripheral surface of a drum having a predetermined outer diameter at a predetermined pitch, and sticking side edges of the wound ribbon to each other to form a cylindrical wound body;

spirally cutting said wound body at a predetermined pitch larger than the winding pitch of said ribbon to form a belt material having a predetermined width and a cord inclination angle;

peeling the belt material from said drum; and

pressing the belt material peeled from the drum onto a top surface of a tray with a predetermined pressure to transfer the belt material thereon, and transporting said tray in a direction intersecting the axial line of the drum.

55. A method of manufacturing a belt material for a tire characterized by comprising the steps of:

spirally winding a ribbon formed of a plurality of cords arranged longitudinally and covered with a rubber coating around an outer peripheral surface of a drum having a predetermined outer diameter at a predetermined pitch, and sticking side edges of the wound ribbon to each other to form a cylindrical wound body;

spirally cutting said wound body at a predetermined pitch larger than the winding pitch of said ribbon to form a belt material having a predetermined width and a cord inclination angle; and